

What is claimed is:

1. A method for displaying information in a display associated with an electronic device, comprising:

organizing a plurality of information entries into a hierarchy comprising a plurality of groups, at least one of which groups having at least one sublevel of subgroups; and

displaying panels on a display associated with an electronic device, the panels being arranged into two bars of panels with a common focus panel, each of the panels being linked to and identifying one of (a) one of the plurality of information entries, (b) one of the groups, and (c) one of the subgroups,

wherein the focus panel identifies (a) a currently selectable lowest level in the hierarchy and (b) the next higher level, if any,

wherein levels, if any, in the hierarchy higher than that displayed in the focus panel are identified in succeeding adjoining panels of a first of the two bars, other panels of the first bar identifying highest level groups in the hierarchy, and

wherein panels of the second of the two bars each identify one of (a) information entries, if any, (b) groups, if any, and (c) subgroups, if any, of the same level in the hierarchy as the currently selectable lowest level in the hierarchy identified in the focus panel.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the two bars are sized and positioned on the display so as to permit viewing of a substantial portion of a background image presented on the display.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the two bars are perpendicular to one another.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein each of the two bars are positioned on the display to be proximate an edge of the display.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein each of the two bars are positioned on the display to be parallel to an edge of the display.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the two bars are displayed on the display only upon entry of a command by a user.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein upon entry by the user on an input device of a selecting command, the electronic device performs an action corresponding to an information entry identified in the focus panel.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein a currently selected lowest level in the hierarchy identified in the focus panel is changed upon the entry of a navigation command by the user on an input device.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein information entries, groups, or subgroups

linked to the panels are identified on the panels by at least one of text and graphics.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the panels is one of semi-transparent and transparent.

11. An apparatus for displaying information in a display associated with an electronic device, comprising:

a database storing a plurality of information entries in a hierarchy comprising a plurality of groups, at least one of which groups having at least one sublevel of subgroups; and

a means for displaying panels on a display associated with an electronic device, the panels being arranged into two bars of panels with a common focus panel, each of the panels being linked to and identifying one of (a) one of the plurality of information entries, (b) one of the groups, and (c) one of the subgroups,

wherein the focus panel identifies (a) a currently selectable lowest level in the hierarchy and (b) the next higher level, if any,

wherein levels, if any, in the hierarchy higher than that displayed in the focus panel are identified in succeeding adjoining panels of a first of the two bars, other panels of the first bar identifying highest level groups in the hierarchy, and

wherein panels of the second of the two bars each identify one of (a) information entries, if any, (b) groups, if any, and (c) subgroups, if any, of the same level in the hierarchy as the currently selectable lowest level in the hierarchy identified in the focus panel.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the two bars are sized and positioned on the display so as to permit viewing of a substantial portion of a background image presented on the display.

13. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the two bars are perpendicular to one another.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein each of the two bars are positioned on the display to be proximate an edge of the display.

15. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein each of the two bars are positioned on the display to be parallel to an edge of the display.

16. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the two bars are displayed on the display only upon entry of a command by a user.

17. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein upon entry by the user on an input device of a selecting command, the electronic device performs an action corresponding to an information entry identified in the focus panel.

18. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein a currently selected lowest level in the hierarchy identified in the focus panel is changed upon the entry of a navigation command by the

user on an input device.

19. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein information entries, groups, or subgroups linked to the panels are identified on the panels by at least one of text and graphics.

20. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein at least one of the panels is one of semi-transparent and transparent.

TO BE FORWARDED TO THE PATENT OFFICE